DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 329 799 CE 057 437

TITLE Saginaw Adult Basic Education: Product Evaluation Report 1989-90.
INSTITUTION Saginaw Public Schools, Mich. Dept. of Evaluation Services.
PUB DATE Mar 91
NOTE 24p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Basic Education; Adult Literacy; Correctional Education; Disabilities; *Educational Objectives; *Literacy Education; Older Adults; *Outcomes of Education; Prisoners; *Program Effectiveness; *Program Improvement; Rural Education; Standards
IDENTIFIERS *Saginaw School System MI

ABSTRACT

During the 1989-90 school year, 978 adult learners received basic and remedial instruction at the 19 sites of the adult basic education (ABE) program of the School District of the City of Saginaw (Michigan). The program's objectives were specifically aimed at adults who are urban residents from high unemployment areas, rural residents, members of minority groups, limited in English abilities, over age 60, handicapped, immigrants, incarcerated, or women with special needs. Six of the program's 11 objectives were met during the 1989-90 school year, a decrease from the previous year when 8 of 11 objectives were met. However, two of the program objectives--setting educational objectives for 100 percent of the participants who received 12 or more instructional hours and the standard of 15 percent of the participants being rural--may have been inappropriately high. The program did not meet its standard for student achievement. Only handicapped students met the performance standards; incarcerated, English-as-a-Second-Language, senior citizens, and regular ABE students did not. It was recommended that program staff should: (1) seek ways to provide services to homeless persons; (2) consider ways to modify program objectives that seem unrealistic; (3) determine what may have caused the extreme decline in performance among incarcerated students; (4) review the reporting procedures for accuracy; and (5) standardize classroom operations. (KC)

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SAGINAW ADULT BASIC EDUCATION: PRODUCT EVALUATION REPORT

1989-90

An Approved Report of the

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March, 1991

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INTRODUCTION

The Adult Basic Education (ABE) program of the School District of the City of Saginaw recently completed its 29th year of operation. The program, administered by the Office of Adult and Continuing Education, is designed to meet the educational needs of adults who have less than an eighth grade education. It provides basic and remedial instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic as well as in Michigan Life Role Competencies (MLRC), English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Bilingual, and Pre-General Educational Development (Pre-GED).

The ABE program serves a diverse population. It has program goals and objectives specifically aimed at adults who are:

- Urban residents from high unemployment areas,
- Rural residents,
- Members of minority groups,
- Limited in English abilities,
- Over 60,
- Handicapped,
- Immigrants,
- Incarcerated, and
- Women with special needs.

Enrollment in ABE is open throughout the year. Upon enrolling, each student's needs are identified. An individualized educational plan (IEP), which focuses on those needs and establishes educational objectives for that student, is drawn up. The teacher to whom that student is assigned writes that plan with the student.

During 1989-90, 978 students received services by attending one or more of the 51 classes conducted in the 19 centers located throughout Saginaw. (Appendix A contains a list of the names and addresses.) These classes were designed to be taught in a traditional manner wherein three instructional

topics (reading, mathematics, and MLRC) were to be taught on a daily basis and the entire class would be working on assignments within the same topic.

Students from all of the groups cited above received ABE services during the year. Demographic data (racial/ethnic, gender, and age breakdowns) on this year's student population can be found in Appendix B.

In 1989-90, the ABE staff consisted of one program supervisor, 24 teachers (21 full-time and three part-time), one full-time student advisor, seven teacher aides (four full- and three part-time), and two secretaries (one full- and one part-time). In addition, there were 82 voluntary literacy tutors.

PRODUCT EVALUATION PROCEDURES

This evaluation will address program performance relative to the goals and objectives stated in the 1989-90 ABE grant. (A process evaluation focusing on whether the program was operating as intended was conducted during the year; its results were published under a separate cover.)

ABE data were recorded by the ABE teachers on the "Adult Basic Education Objective Reporting Form" (Appendix C contains a copy). These sheets were collected by the program supervisor every eight weeks. During a first semester staff inservice, the supervisor stressed to the staff the importance of having these sheets fully and timely completed.

The supervisor provided the additional information and documentation necessary to examine program performance.

These data were compared to the standards mandated in the grant.

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

The ABE data were analyzed with respect to the criteria specified for each objective of the grant. The following sections will present the findings of these analyses.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

The grant specified enrollment goals for seven ABE student classifications. Table 1, below, presents these classifications, their respective goals and enrollment figures, and whether the standards were attained.

TABLE 1. ABE STUDENTS BY POPULATION CLASSIFICATION 1989-90.

Population (N=978)	Minimum Percent Enrollment Standard	Number and Percent of Participants*		Attainment Of Standard
		N	%	
Adults With Limited English Language Skills	10	115	11.8	Yes
Unemployed	15	612	62.6	Yes
Rural	15	71	7.3	No
Handicapped	10	30	3.1	No
Minority	75	788	80.6	Yes
Female Heads of Households/ ADC Recipients	15	306	31.3	Yes
Homeless	10	0	0.0	No

*Figures reflect duplicated counts.

By examining Table 1, it can be seen that the program attained its enrollment objectives for four of the seven classifications (57.1%)[1].

DROPOUT PREVENTION

The grant specified that the ABE program was to attain a dropout[2] rate at or below 40% from among the students who received at least 12 hours of instruction. In the last two years (1987-88 and 1988-89) this standard was attained.

A review of year-end data indicated that 436 (45.0%) of the 968 students receiving 12 hours or more of instruction (see Table 2, below) dropped out of the program. The dropout prevention standard was not attained.

RECRUITMENT

Prior to the 1988-89 school year, a recruitment campaign was conducted for the ABE program. The campaign consisted of the distribution of bulletins containing general information about the program (e.g., class offerings and locations, and phone numbers to call for information).

The major goals of the recruitment campaign were to attract new students to the program and to motivate previous students to return. The standard set in the grant was that at least 10% of the student population be new to the program. According to enrollment data, 523 (53.5%) students were new. The standard was met.

---

[1]It should be pointed out that a standard of 15% rural students may not be realistic for an ABE program operating in an urban environment.

[2]A dropout is defined as a student who leaves the program for a reason other than employment, passing the General Educational Development (GED), completing his/her ABE objectives, or death.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Background

The program tracks the achievement of five student classifications. These five are: handicapped, ESL (bilingual), incarcerated, senior citizen, and regular (those not classifiable in the other four categories). Individual ABE objectives were to be assigned to any student receiving 12 hours or more of instruction and 75% of those students, within classification and across the program, were to attain mastery on at least 75% of their objectives.

This Year

A review of the records demonstrated that 968 adult learners received at least 12 instructional hours. Table 2, below, is a presentation of students, by classification and total, who received 12 or more hours of instruction and the number and percent of them who were assigned objectives.

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF ABE STUDENTS, BY PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION AND TOTAL, WHO RECEIVED 12 OR MORE HOURS OF INSTRUCTION AND THE NUMBER AND PERCENT WHO WERE ASSIGNED OBJECTIVES, 1989-90.

Classification	Number Receiving 12 or More Hours of Instruction	Assigned Objectives N	Assigned Objectives %
Handicapped	31	31	100.0
ESL (Bilingual)	97	93	95.9
Incarcerated	71	71	100.0
Senior Citizen	78	76	97.4
Regular	691	685	99.1
Program Total	968	956	98.8

As can be seen in Table 2 above, 956 (98.8%) of the students who were provided 12 hours or more of instruction were assigned individual objectives. Thus, while this portion of the program objective was not attained literally, it could be argued that it was attained functionally. Further, this represents a substantial improvement over last year when objectives were assigned to only 89.5% of those students who received 12 hours or more of instruction.

In reference to student performance, Table 3 below, presents the number and percent of students (who received both 12 hours of instruction and individual objectives), by classification and program total, who mastered at least 75% of their individual objectives. (Table D.1, in Appendix D presents a quartile distribution of objective attainment by student classification and total.)

TABLE 3. NUMBER AND PERCENT OF ABE STUDENTS, BY PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION AND TOTAL, WHO ATTAINED THE STANDARD* IN 1989-90.

Participant Classification	Students Assigned Objectives and Receiving 12 or More Hours of Instruction	Attained Standard*		Program Performance Standard** Attained?
		N	%	
Handicapped	31	26	83.9	Yes
ESL (Bilingual)	93	67	72.0	No
Incarcerated	71	27	38.0	No
Senior Citizen	76	51	68.9	No
Regular	685	360	52.6	No
Program Total	956	531	55.5	No

*Attaining mastery on 75% of their individual objectives.
**Seventy-five percent of the students will attain the standard.

A review of Table 3 reveals the following:

- The program standard was met by the handicapped students.
- The program standard was not met by students in any of the other categories.
- Total program results indicate that overall the performance standard was not met.

Even though this standard was not achieved, an examination of Table D.1 reveals that, program wide, 75.1% of the ABE students attained at least 50% of their objectives (i.e., 24.9% mastered less than 50% of their objectives). Similar success rates were evident within all but one category, ranging from 74.7% (among regular ABE students) to 93.6% (among handicapped students) attaining at least 50% of their objectives. Among incarcerated students, only 42.3% attained at least 50% of their objectives.

Longitudinal

A three year comparison of student performance data was conducted.

As to the first portion of the objective, in each year, less than 100% of those students receiving 12 or more hours of instruction were assigned objectives. The actual numbers and percents of students for each year are specified below.

Year	N	%
1987-88	875	86.1
1988-89	904	89.5
1989-90	956	98.8

A three year review of the number and percent of students (who received both 12 hours of instruction and individual objectives), by classification and program total, who met the standard (mastering 75% of their objectives) is presented in Table 4, below.

TABLE 4. NUMBER AND PERCENT OF ABE STUDENTS, BY CLASSIFICATION AND TOTAL, WHO MET THE STANDARD* IN 1987-88, 1988-89, AND 1989-90.

Participant Classification	Year 1987-88 N	1987-88 %	1988-89 N	1988-89 %	1989-90 N	1989-90 %
Handicapped	15	24.6	37	71.2	26	83.9
ESL (Bilingual)	49	61.3	49	64.5	67	72.0
Incarcerated	33	78.6	31	77.5	27	38.0
Senior Citizen	65	68.4	72	68.6	51	67.1
Regular	410	51.8	371	58.8	360	52.6
Program Total**	462	52.8	560	61.9	531	55.5

*Attaining mastery on 75% of their individual objectives.
**The program totals for 1987-88 and 1989-90 are unduplicated counts (ABE students could only be in one classification). The total for 1988-89 is a duplicated count.

An examination of Table 4 reveals the following points:

- Performance levels among handicapped and ESL students rose each year.
- Performance levels among senior citizens and regular ABE students fluctuated, rising between 1987-88 and 1988-89 but declining between 1988-89 and 1989-90. However, these fluctuations were not dramatic.
- Performance levels among incarcerated students declined marginally between 1987-88 and 1988-89 and substantially between 1988-89 and 1989-90.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

Another goal of the ABE program was to have cooperative arrangements with various local agencies. Although no longer specified in the grant as an objective, documentation verified that such agreements exist with the following agencies.

- Tri-City SER: Jobs For Progress
- Trinity St. John Community Center
- Bethel AME Church
- First Ward Community Center
- Grace Presbyterian Church
- Michigan Employment Security Commission (MESC)
- Neighborhood House Lutheran Social Services
- Redeemer Lutheran Church
- Saginaw Community Village
- Saginaw County Child Development Center
- Saginaw County Community Action Committee (CAC)
- Saginaw County Department of Public Health, Aging Services Division
- Saginaw County Department of Social Services (DSS)
- Saginaw County Jail

According to conversations with the program supervisor, these cooperative agreements work to the mutual advantage of the ABE program and the respective agencies.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

During the 1989-90 school year, 978 adult learners received services from the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program. Remedial and basic instruction was offered in reading, mathematics, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Michigan Life Role Competencies (MLRC) at 19 sites located throughout Saginaw.

The 1989-90 grant contained 11 objectives. Six (54.5%) of these objectives were met. This represents a decrease over the previous year when eight of 11 objectives (72.7%) were attained.

However, when considering this, it should be noted that two of the program objectives may have inappropriately high attainment criteria. Specifically, these were: setting educational objectives for 100% of the participants who received 12 or more instructional hours; and the standard of 15% of the participants being rural.

With specific regard to student achievement, the program did not meet its standard. When student achievements are considered by classification, only the handicapped students met the performance standard; incarcerated, ESL, senior citizen, and regular ABE students did not.

The chart on the next page summarizes the ABE program's objective attainment for 1989-90.

Objective	Standard	Supporting Data	Standard Achieved?
1. ESL Instruction	≥ 10% ESL students	11.8% ESL students	Yes
2. Service to the unemployed	≥ 15% unemployed students	62.6% unemployed students	Yes
3. Service to the rural	≥ 15% rural* students	7.3% rural students	No
4. Services to the incarcerated	Full-time program for county jail inmates	Full-time program provided	Yes
5. Services to the handicapped	≥ 10% handicapped students	3.1% handicapped students	No
6. Services to minorities	≥ 75% minority students	80.6% minority students	Yes
7. Services to women with special needs	≥ 15% special needs students	31.3% female students with special needs	Yes
8. Recruitment	≥ 10% new students	53.5% new students	Yes
9. Academic Services	a. 100% with ≥ 12 hours are assigned objectives	a. 98.8% with ≥ 12 hours were assigned objectives	No**
	b. 75% will attain 75% of their objectives	b. 55.5% attained 75% of their objectives	
10. Dropout Prevention	> 40% will drop out	45.5% dropped out	No
11. Service to the homeless	≥ 10% homeless students	0.0% homeless students	No

*This may be an inappropriately high standard for an urban based ABE program.
**The first portion of this objective may be viewed as functionally attained.

In light of these findings and the findings of the process evaluation, recommendations intended to help improve the ABE program have been developed. They appear on the following page.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the 1989-90 process and product findings, the following recommendations are offered.

- The program staff should seek ways to provide service to the homeless.

  - One avenue for doing this may be going through contacts with the City Rescue Mission (as specified in the grant) or with the religious and social services mentioned in the cooperative agreements subsection above.

  - The objective reporting form needs to be modified to include each student's homeless status.

- The program staff should consider ways to modify those program objective attainment standards which seem unrealistic.

  - The standard for assignment of objectives to students who received 12 or more instructional hours is now 100%. It could be modified to read "at least 98%". This modification would allow for some margin of error while still keeping the standard sufficiently rigid to guarantee the activity occurs program-wide.

  - Given this program functions in an urban environment, a standard of 15% rural students is arguably high. This and previous reports indicate program percents of rural students ranging from seven to ten percent, which suggests that a standard of "at least seven percent" would better suit the program.

- The program staff should determine what may have caused the extreme decline in performance among incarcerated students[4] and what could be done to improve their performance in the future.

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[4]There were staff changes in 1989-90 which resulted, in part, in a new teacher being assigned to the incarcerated students. However, this change seems insufficient to fully explain their performance decline.

- The program staff should continue to review the correct reporting processes and instruments for accuracy prior to submitting them to evaluation staff. These reviews, at minimum, should verify the following:

  - Demographic data describing each student is accurate and complete;

  - Students who have received 12 or more hours of instruction have been assigned objectives; and

  - Performance data (attainment of objectives, dropping out, etc.) is accurate and complete.

- A handbook should be written to standardize classroom operations in terms of the following:

  - Subject areas taught during each class session and appropriate amounts of class time devoted to each:

  - Reinforcement to promote student achievement; and

  - Proper testing procedures.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION CENTERS 1989-90

Center Name	Street Address
Arthur Eddy Center	1000 Cathay
Audra Francis Center	2717 Webber
Bethel AME Church	535 Cathay
Coulter Elementary School	1450 Bridgton
Community Village	3200 Hospital Road
Elmwood Manor	2814 E. Genesee
First Ward Community Center	1410 N. 12th
Grace Presbyterian Church	600 Dearborn
Kresge Head Start Program	1921 Annesley
Maplewood Manor	535 S. Warren
Marie Davis Center	222 S. Weadock
Merrill Park Elementary School	1800 Grout
Neighborhood House	3145 Russell
Redeemer Lutheran Church	3829 Lamson
Ruben Daniels Lifelong Learning Center	115 W. Genesee
Saginaw Valley Rehabilitation Center	919 Veterans' Memorial Pkwy
Saginaw County Jail	208 S. Harrison
Tri-City SER: Jobs For Progress	1535 S. Warren
Trinity Center	346 S. 9th

APPENDIX B

TABLE B.1. NUMBER AND PERCENT OF 1989-90 ABE PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER.

Gender	N	Z
Male	447	45.7
Female	531	54.3
TOTAL	978	100.0

TABLE B.2. NUMBER AND PERCENT OF 1989-90 ABE PARTICIPANTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY.

American Indian		Black		Oriental		Hispanic		White		No Resp.		Total	
N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
4	0.4	564	57.7	34	3.5	186	19.0	186	19.0	4	0.4	978	100.0

TABLE B.3. NUMBER AND PERCENT OF 1989-90 ABE PARTICIPANTS BY AGE.

Age	Total	
	N	Z
13-24	377	38.5
25-44	388	39.7
45-59	121	12.4
60 and Over	83	8.5
No Response	9	0.9
TOTAL	978	100.0

Saginaw Adult Basic Education Objective Reporting Form

PLEASE NOTE: This form is to be completed by each teacher. The Objective Report must be updated every 8 weeks indicating objective mastery and additional objectives.

Student _____ (Last / First)

Student No. _____

Class _____ Teacher _____

Entry Date _____ Drop Date _____ Code _____

Transferred to: Class _____ Date _____ Level _____ Level Movement _____ Teacher _____

___ Male ___ Female ___ 65 and over ___ Unemployed ___ Employed

___ Nonworker ___ Rural ___ Urban ___ Single Female ___ On Public Assistance

___ New Student ___ Returning Student ___ Institutionalized ___ Limited English Speaking ___ Handicapped

___ Immigrant Adult

ETHNIC CODE ___ American Indian (1) ___ Black (2)

Age _____ ___ Oriental (3) ___ Hispanic (4) ___ Other (5)

First Semester

___ ABE ___ ESL ___ BILINGUAL

No. of hours attended

Reading Obj. #	Obj. Level	M	N	Pick Up 1	Pick Up 2	Lang. Arts Obj. #	Obj. Level	M	N	Pick Up 1	Pick Up 2

Spelling Obj. #	Obj. Level	M	N	Pick Up 1	Pick Up 2	Math Obj. #	Obj. Level	M	N	Pick Up 1	Pick Up 2

MLHC	AHA	CBR	PPG	BCB	HBA	M	M	I	S	I	S	MLHC	AHA	CBR	PPG	BCB	HBA	M	M	I	S	I	S

Pick Up

Pick Up

Second Semester

___ ABE ___ ESL ___ BILINGUAL

No. of hours attended

Reading Obj. #	Obj. Level	M	N	Pick Up 3	Pick Up 4	Lang. Arts Obj. #	Obj. Level	M	N	Pick Up 3	Pick Up 4

Spelling Obj. #	Obj. Level	M	N	Pick Up 3	Pick Up 4	Math Obj. #	Obj. Level	M	N	Pick Up 3	Pick Up 4

MLHC	AHA	CBR	PPG	BCB	HBA	M	M	I	S	I	S	MLHC	AHA	CBR	PPG	BCB	HBA	M	M	I	S	I	S

Pick Up

Pick Up

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX D

TABLE D.1. QUARTILE DISTRIBUTION OF OBJECTIVE ATTAINMENT FOR ABE STUDENTS BY CLASSIFICATION--1989-1990.

Student Classification	Number and Percent of ABE Students								Total	
	First Quartile (0-24.9%)		Second Quartile (25-49.9%)		Third Quartile (50-74.9%)		Fourth Quartile (75-100%)			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	% of Grand Total*
Handicapped	0	(0.0%)	2	(6.4%)	3	(9.7%)	26	(83.9%)	31	(3.2%)
Limited Eng.	9	(9.7%)	3	(3.2%)	14	(15.1%)	67	(72.0%)	83	(9.7%)
Incarcerated*	36	(50.7%)	5	(7.0%)	3	(4.2%)	27	(38.0%)	71	(7.4%)
Senior Citz.	5	(6.6%)	5	(6.6%)	15	(19.7%)	51	(67.1%)	76	(7.8%)
Regular ABE*	108	(15.8%)	65	(9.5%)	152	(22.2%)	360	(52.6%)	685	(71.8%)
Total	158	(16.5%)	80	(8.4%)	187	(19.6%)	531	(55.5%)	956	(100.0%)
Cumulative Total	158	(16.5%)	238	(24.9%)	425	(44.5%)	956	(100.0%)	956	(100.0%)

*This column/row does not sum to 100.0% due to rounding.